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**Choose 2 educational philosophers/ schools of thought that appeal to you and your thoughts about schooling.**

The first School of thought that I came across was idealism. This school of thought, while I do not agree with the entire philosophy of the concept, has positive applications towards education. Idealism is defined as: a school of philosophy that holds that ideas or concepts are the essence of all that is worth knowing. Although I do not believe that statement in its full, the idea applied to education can be highly beneficial for the success of the students. Idealists hold the belief that the teacher is the ideal model or example for the student. All teachers should reflect on that concept to understand their impact over their students, and apply that idea towards their teaching methods. The idealist believes that “learning comes from within the individual rather than from without. Hence, real mental growth and spiritual growth do not occur until they are self-initiated. Another aspect of idealism within education is the emphasis on methods of lecture, discussion and imitation. All three of these aspects are vital for student learning. Learning cannot be strictly a one way approach; students learn in all different ways and their needs must be met for them to appropriately learn in their environment. Idealism in education, while it can be beneficial, is not necessarily the best approach due to the fact that it does not reflect on student based learning. There are Ideas however, in other schools of thought that touch upon that aspect further.

Pragmatism is somewhere in the middle of idealism and realism, making it the ideal approach within todays education systems. This philosophy’s roots come from the thinking of a number of nineteenth century American philosophers including Charles S. Pierce, William James, and John Dewey. Pragmatism can be defined as: a process philosophy that stresses evolving and change rather than being. Because change is so dominant in the views of the pragmatist; they emphasize the importance of understanding what it means to “know”. This understanding is receives best through experience. Experience is something that students must be given in order to truly learn in schools. Realists and Idealists call for a curriculum centered on academic disciplines, but pragmatists prefer a curriculum that draws the disciplines together to solve problems—an interdisciplinary approach. I believe this approach builds students to be wise rather than just simply knowledgeable. In todays education system many students come out of high school, knowing information, however they are clueless when it comes to applying what they have learned to real life situations. Knowing and understanding how to confidently apply what you have learned to real world situations should be the point of schooling. Intelligence is not based on knowledge alone, but also on the ability to apply knowledge, to problem solve, and to understand the world as it changes. Because the world is constantly changing, and what we know about the world is growing, knowledge is “subject to revision.” This is the reason why the pragmatist approach towards education views that it is most important to teach students to know HOW to construct, use, and test knowledge claims.